

Final Notes, Skagit Watershed Council Technical Work Group (TWG) December 15th, 2022 1:00pm-3:00pm, Zoom Meeting

(decisions underlined, **action items in bold**)

Attendees: Alison Studley (SFEG, Chair), Aundrea McBride (SWC), Colin Wahl (SRSC), Regina Wandler (Skagit Land Trust), Rick Hartson (Upper Skagit Indian Tribe), Taylor (Studzinski) Scott (Conservation District), Emily Derenne (Skagit County)

Absent: Jeff Fisher (Seattle City Light)

Guests: Richard Brocksmith (SWC)

Beginning Business

Introductions and check-in: quorum achieved.

Agenda review: approved the agenda.

Notes: Motion to approve by Colin, seconded by Rick, all approve.

Committee Updates

Board: Met December 1st. The bylaws were open for discussion, but there was none. They discussed the draft report for the riparian landowner incentives ideas and added that topic to the Membership Meeting agenda. The draft is being circulated. The governor's budget has since come out and is positive for salmon recovery. 100 million is proposed for riparian restoration via Conservation Commission to create a state-level CREP-like program. Good opportunity to think about subbasin planning. Discussed the PSAR 10-year plan process. Skagit will participate.

Protection: Met December 14th. Recommended the 2022 Protection Strategy be approved by the TWG (will be on next month's TWG agenda). Got a preview of two parcels.

M&AM: Discussed the 4 Year Work Plan and added several proposed projects to it.

Riparian: Met December 7th. Got a conference update. Discussed the proposal by Ecology to partner on further developing the riparian database. They had concerns with using Ecology's money but still interested in creating a public-facing database with different dollars. The group wants to keep its limited focus.

Discussion:

- Kate at VSP is exploring the idea of a study to link buffer width to stream temps
- King County Snoqualmie did a science review of this topic a few years back
- ***Alison would like to see notes from the RWG meeting and see their goals. If they are not covering riparian objectives does TWG need to be doing it?**

Program Guide

Changes to note:

- LECC meetings are only two weeks apart
- RFP- with the rolled over PSAR money this will be a big grant round. All funds will be available in September. \$300k set aside for riparian projects and \$50k for monitoring.

All approve recommending the Board approve the 2023 Program Guide

M&AM Additions to the 4 Year Work Plan

M&AM broadened out the list to include monitoring projects to fill data gaps even if not SRFB eligible

- Hydromod inventory update- USIT is considering different methods
- Milltown before and after effectiveness monitoring
- Cattail project-how are salmon responding to invasive cattail
- Chinook floodplain growth-a surrogate for habitat productivity
- Estuarine residence variation-using old otolith samples to look at growth over time for juveniles in the estuary
- Alluvial fans-salmon use of alluvial fans is different from floodplains and tributaries
- Change in density dependence causing better growth-this was noticed after 2021 flooding

Discussion

- What is the role of the TWG? Is this list to be approved or just for information?
- How do these projects help restoration?
- Are these projects related to the Chinook Recovery Plan?
- ***These questions need to go back to the M&AM.**

Project Updates

South Fork is done

Cedar Grove is done except some planting and will probably have some return funds.

County Lower Day Slough culvert is way behind schedule. The design is not adequate. Still trying to get 90% design.

SFEG Lower Day Slough project will likely have return funds

DeBays cost increase was denied but they are going to the SRFB again on December 22nd.

Hansen Creek project is being held up by a permit.

Red Creek has had improved communication with the neighbors. It will replace a crushed culvert to decrease flooding

Similk has been delayed by landowner certification. They are looking at ground water effects and scoping a small creek restoration in the golf course.

Skiyou hydraulic study is done.

Smokehouse has applied for federal funding.

Crescent Creek has been initiated.

Tenas Creek has 2 alternatives that are being considered.

Several tribal culvert projects were funded.
SLT has just about spent down grants except the newest one.

General discussion:

- Corps permitting is an issue slowing down all projects and needs action. TWG will continue this conversation.
- WCC not available. This is an issue.

Announcements

SFEG got a Rose Foundation grant for Parker Creek
County got Rose Foundation grant for Barrel Springs project

Adjourn 3:11

Upcoming TWG Meetings:

January 19
February 16
March 16